

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

ORDINANCE NO.5433

AN ORDINANCE relating to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Bellevue, as required and adopted pursuant to the Growth Management Act of 1990, as amended (chapter 36.70A RCW); adopting a 2003 amendment to the Comprehensive Plan glossary, amending the definition of General Commercial District to allow for expansion of retail uses serving business customers in the District and declaring the existence of an emergency affecting the economic viability of properties located within the District.

WHEREAS, in 2002, the City initiated a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to amend the General Commercial District definition of the Comprehensive Plan to allow for a limited amount of retail use in the GC district; and

WHEREAS, on June 26, 2002, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve such proposed amendment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has considered that amendment concurrently with the other 2002 amendments and adopted the proposed amendment by Ordinance No. 5395 but also directed the Planning Commission to consider further expansion of retail uses and to hold a public hearing on whether such expansion would be desirable to address a potential economic emergency affecting the public health and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Growth Management Act requires jurisdictions to act no more than once per year to amend their Comprehensive Plans, except in the event of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a second public hearing on such proposed amendment; and

WHEREAS, testimony before the Planning Commission established that:

- there are higher than normal vacancy rates in the GC district and that empty storefronts reflect a net loss of jobs in the local economy

- the economic downturn is not expected to turn around soon and that regional experts suggest that recovery will be very slow and it will be 18 months or longer before the area rebounds from the current economic slump
- the previous direction of the Council to add “business sales and services” to the permitted uses in the GC district was not broad enough to mitigate the effects of the current economic downturn because the number of new businesses wanting to take advantage of this change would be relatively small
- business owners currently prohibited from locating in the GC district have indicated a desire to locate in existing centers within the district
- permitting a wide variety of additional retail uses in the GC district will permit those businesses to locate there, make the area more competitive in the retail area, promote new businesses and job creation, provide additional goods and services to the community, and increase tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, the testimony before the Planning Commissions has identified certain barriers to the economic viability of properties in the GC district; and

WHEREAS, these barriers may hinder the economic recovery of local businesses and the economic recovery of the City as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bellevue has complied with the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act and the City Environmental Procedures Code; now, therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. An economic emergency exists, as recited hereinabove, which necessitates amendment of the Comprehensive Plan outside of the annual process to provide for expansion of retail uses in the GC district.

Section 2. The Subarea and TFP Glossary of the Comprehensive Plan, “General Commercial” definition is hereby amended to read as follows:

General Commercial District – A land use designation that provides for the location of a wide variety of business activities that provide goods and services to other businesses and the general public.

Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force five days after its passage and legal publication. This ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan shall be available for public inspection in the office of the City Clerk.

Passed by the City Council this 21st day of January, 2003, and signed in authentication of its passage this 21st day of January, 2003.

(SEAL)

Connie B. Marshall, Mayor

Approved as to form:

Richard L. Andrews, City Attorney

Lori M. Riordan, Assistant City Attorney

Attest:

Myrna L. Basich, City Clerk

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